



# March 22, 2010 Wyandotte Distinguished Graduate Inductee



## Nancy (Schneider) Hanson Class of 1957

Hundreds of people have Nancy (Schneider) Hanson to thank for improving their quality of life. Her innovations in social work have resulted in advances in adoption, foster care, education, legal services, counseling, and health care.

After graduation from Wyandotte Roosevelt High School, Mrs. Hanson continued her education at the University of Iowa, the University of Charleston, West Virginia, and she completed her Masters of Social Work Degree in 1979 at the University of Illinois, Chicago.

As a Social Worker she worked with clients in child welfare, hospice, schools, the court system, and substance abuse treatment. She was also a human services advocate at the local, state, and national level. In 1993, Mrs. Hanson, along with a small group of volunteers, recognized the need to care for ill and injured homeless men and women who had been discharged from hospitals with no place to go to recuperate. Together they founded Interfaith House Respite Center in Chicago which was the third facility of its kind in the country. She was a member of the Board of Directors for 12 years and served as Board President from 1998 to 2002. Currently she is on the Advisory Board and remains an active fundraiser for the organization.

Under her leadership, the Respite Care Provider's National Network was created in 2003 and now includes over 50 medical respite programs in 28 states and Ontario, Canada. These innovative centers provide medical care, room and board, and supportive services for homeless persons who are too ill or frail to recover from a physical illness or injury on the street, but who are not ill enough to be in the hospital.

Mrs. Hanson has been honored with the Carol Award for Outstanding Community Service in La Crosse, Wisconsin in 1969; the Social Worker of the Year Award for Fox Valley, Illinois District in 1989; and Volunteer of the Year for Interfaith House in 1999. Mrs. Hanson resides in Hinsdale, Illinois, with her husband, Tom. They have two adult sons and two grandchildren.